

REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-18 remain pending in the application. Claims 1-6, 10-16 and 18 stand allowed. Claim 7 has been amended to improve claim language.

Claims 7-9 and 17 are rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hehlen et al. (US 6,580,842). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection for the reasons below.

Independent claim 7 recites that the optical component is positioned adjacent to and in contact with the first plane face of the blind cut, which is not disclosed or suggested by Hehlen applied by the Examiner. Specifically, Hehlen in Fig. 3 appears to disclose isolator element 116 (regarded by the Examiner as the claimed optical component) located near optical waveguides 104 (regarded by the Examiner as the claimed first plane face of the blind cut) rather than in contact with the optical waveguides 104.

Further, Applicants respectfully submit that the optical waveguide of Hehlen cannot be substituted by an optical fiber. Hehlen requires that each waveguide includes an expanded-mode section 126 which is used to adiabatically expand the mode sizes of forward- and backward-propagating beams. Likewise, the polarization multiplexers 508 and 510 cannot be replaced by optical fibers, because if the waveguides or the polarization multiplexers 508 and 510 of Hehlen would be replaced by optical fibers, such requirement of Hehlen cannot be satisfied.

Accordingly, claim 7 should be patentable over the applied art, and claims 8-9 and 17 depend on claim 7 and should be patentable for the reasons advanced with respect to claim 7, therefore, this rejection should be withdrawn.

All objections and rejections having been addressed, it is respectfully submitted that the present application should be in condition for allowance and a Notice to that effect is earnestly solicited.

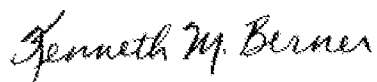
Early issuance of a Notice of Allowance is courteously solicited.

The Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned, Applicant's attorney of record, to facilitate advancement of the present application.

To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. 1.136 is hereby made. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account 07-1337 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,

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